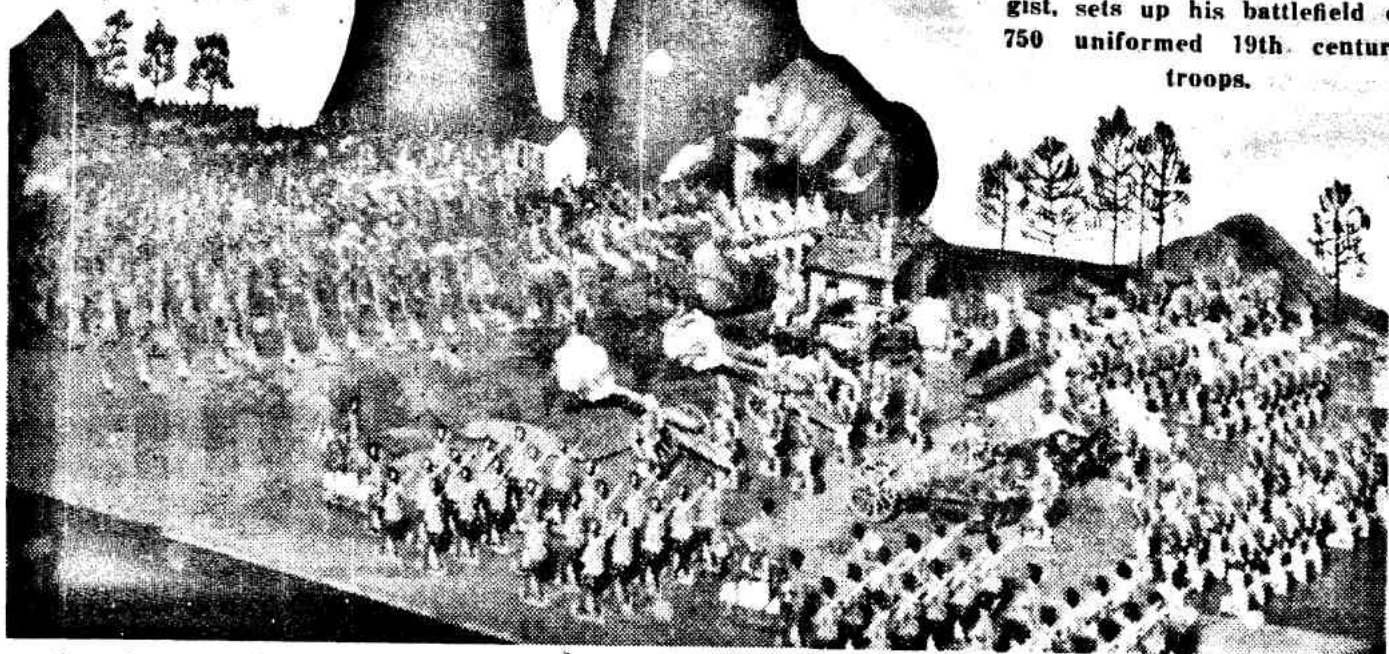


# and his tabletop army



Major Svensen, a careful strategist, sets up his battlefield of 750 uniformed 19th century troops.

Since then Svensen claims to have improved on the Wells rules for tabletop war. "I have made the games more realistic, particularly when troops come to close quarters in a bayonet or cavalry charge," he says.

He adds: "The game can be played by two or more and may represent a skirmish between small bodies or a full-scale battle with hundreds on each side.

"It becomes engrossingly exciting as troops move forward under fire or are driven back by withering artillery fire."

In the Svensen brand of war game each player is equipped with a model artillery piece which has a heavy wooden shell capable of knocking down a luckless trooper at one yard.

## Old campaigner

Periodic truces—at the height of the "battle" — give time for "top brass" conference to decide which of the luckless troops are permanently hors-de-combat and which are to go to field dressing stations or base hospitals.

The battleground is a large table or, if the human generals are supple of knee, it is the floor where contrived rivers, forests, bridges and other natural topographical hazards are set up to simulate the battlefield.

Any military argument usually is quickly settled by the keen-eyed major who fought at the relief of Kimberley and at Paardeburg on the Modder River against the Boers in 1899-1900.

If that experience is not enough to flatten any tabletop controversy, Major Svensen can bring in first-hand experience from the Battle of Osfontein or, if a later example is preferred, Monash Gully and Pope's Hill.

Unless the opposing human general is a jet fighter pilot he can't argue with an old campaigner like that on military tactics or strategy.

The old tabletop campaigner's fine, meticulously kept, waxed moustache bristles with pride at reunions of the South African War Veterans' Association in Queensland and at those of Brisbane Gallipoli Legion, both organisations of which he is life member, being senior vice-president of the latter.

He served as a mounted officer with the 15th battalion 1st AIF and still wears breeches, boots and spurs in the Anzac Day marches.

Old mates foregather after the Anzac Day march in Svensen's Brisbane home to recapture "the landing" with incongruously garbed troops of other days.

It all adds up to a great, grand game for a seasoned soldier whose army days are over, but who refuses to fade away. ●

## HUMAN GUINEA PIG

**A** HUMAN guinea pig may provide a cure for epilepsy.

He is 44 year-old John Unger, of North Arlington, USA who has contributed part of his brain for medical research.

Since the operation last October, when Public Health Service specialists cut away the diseased part of Unger's brain, Unger has been free from attacks.

So far it is impossible to say whether Unger, victim of nearly 4000 seizures in the past 42 years, is permanently cured.

As in the case of cancer, it takes five years before a cure can be safely claimed.

In the meantime, the scientists believe that the disordered brain tissues, which are being kept alive in special containers, may yield a treatment to prevent seizures in other victims.

The analysed tissues yielded only about half as much glutamic acid as found in normal brain tissue.

In an attempt to make up this deficiency, the scientists tried injecting glutamine—the salt of glutamic acid—into the veins of epileptics, found it immediately restored brain wave readings to near normal.

Glutamine is the first substance found which is able to reduce epileptic brain activity without in some way affecting normal healthy tissue.

Experiments showed that asparagine, the plant counterpart of glutamine which can be taken orally, had a similar corrective effect.

Though slower acting, the effects of the drug seemed to build up after several daily doses.

At least six epileptic patients with long histories of multiple seizures are getting the asparagine treatment as outpatients at the Health Service clinic.

In all cases the seizures have been reduced or ended completely under daily dosage.

Unger, who has been prevented from working all his life by the frequency of his attacks, now plans to take a clerical job.

"I've never felt better in my life," he says.

"They told me that the operation might kill me. But I told them to go ahead if they thought they might learn anything that would help others." ●